



Decisions taken by the Cabinet of Ministers on 01.07.2024

01. Empowering women in the Micro, Small and Medium Business sector

It is observed that women's participation in Sri Lanka's economic affairs is at a lower level than other regional and Asian countries. There are various reasons for this and according to the 2022 survey of Sri Lanka's workforce, thirty-five percent of the economically active population are women. It shows a significant disparity in the gender contribution rates of economic participation. Opportunities for accessing financial resources are limited due to reasons such as women's limited financial literacy and lack of property or security required to obtain a loan. These have been identified as the main obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka. According to the decision of the Cabinet dated 26.02.2024, a provision of twenty billion rupees has been allocated to implement an investment scheme to re-strengthen the enterprise sector. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Hon. President to implement a special loan scheme to remove obstacles for women to engage in economic activities by using two billion rupees out of the twenty billion allocations.

02. Allotment of land for Mahabage Police Station

Mahabagaya Police Station provides services to nearly 50000 people living in eight Grama Niladhari Divisions. Currently, the police station is running on a small area of 21.5 perches, bordering the Colombo-Negombo main road. The public and the officers working there are facing difficulties due to insufficient parking space, non-availability of suitable place to store court productions, Inadequate troop housing facilities and the non availability of quarters. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal made by the Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs and Provincial Councils and Local Government to allocate 40 perches from the land where the Wattala Divisional Secretariat was previously located in order to develop the necessary facilities for the police station.

03. Project Agreement on Global Textiles and Apparel Program between Sri Lanka Export Development Board and Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

It has been proposed to enter into a project agreement between the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs and the Sri Lanka Export Development Board for the implementation of the second phase of the Global Textile and Apparel Program for the Textile and Apparel Industry Sector in Sri Lanka. By entering into the agreement, Sri Lanka will be able to seek the support of the Global Textiles and Apparels Program for a transformation of the textile and apparel industry based on the task of moving towards quality green products by promoting digitization. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Hon. President in his capacity as Minister of Investment Promotion to sign the agreement mentioned above.

04. Project on sustainable and efficient e-mobility system in Sri Lanka

The United Nations Environment Program, an agency endorsed by the Green Environment Fund, has granted a grant of US\$ 1.09 million to implement the project on sustainable and efficient electric mobility system in Sri Lanka. According to the project implementation plan, the Ministry of Environment has been identified as the national entity. However, Ministry of Transport and Highways possesses the ability of initiating the implementation of the project more efficiently together with all the relevant parties since the project scope is under the Ministry of Transport and Highways. As such, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Transport and Highways, to proceed the Ministry of Transport and Highways as the project implementing agency.

05. Handing Henry Pedris Ground over to Isipathana College for sports activities

Isipathana College Colombo has many talented players in various fields and the lack of a permanent playground for the college for sports training has become a great hindrance to improving the skills of those players. In 2016, both parties reached an agreement to use the Henry Pedris Stadium owned by the Colombo Municipal Council for Isipathana College sports activities. The term in that agreement has ended in 2017. By handing over the stadium to Isipathana College, it can be properly improved and maintained so that it can be used effectively for the sports activities of the children of the college and surrounding schools and the people of the area. Accordingly, Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs to hand over the stadium to Isipathana College while maintaining the name Henry Pedris Stadium.

06. Acquisition of a land in Kalmunai town to the Urban Development Authority

In accordance with for the Kalmunai Municipal Council area development plan, the coastal area of Karuna has been designated as a suitable area for tourism and recreational activities. However, it has been recognized that the existing facilities in the city are insufficient for tourism and recreational activities. As such, Cabinet of Ministers approved proposal presented by the Minister of Urban Development and Housing to acquire 01 rood and 29.44 perches of land located on Rest House Road in Kalmunai coastal area to the Urban Development Authority for a tourist facility centre construction project.

07. Revision of Renewable Power Purchase Tariffs under Standard Power Purchase Agreement

In accordance with the Sri Lanka Electricity Act, No. 20 of 2009 and subsequent amendments to the Act, renewable energy projects with a capacity of 10 MW or less shall enter into a standard power purchase agreement under a technology-based Feed In Tariff System. Accordingly, the Cabinet approval has been granted on 13.03.2023 for the implementation of a variable tariff system for the purchase of renewable energy. But only a few developers have taken steps to sign the agreement. Therefore, a committee consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Power and Energy, the Ministry of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies, the Ceylon Electricity Board, the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka has been appointed to make recommendations regarding the calculation of renewable energy tariffs. Accordingly, Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Power and Energy to accept the tariff calculation formula presented by the said committee and to implement the proposed tariff revisions.

08. Establishment of National Quality Council

The National Quality Policy presented in 2016, the National Quality Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2022 and the National Export Strategy of Sri Lanka 2018-2022 have indicated the need to establish a National Quality Council. Currently, the National Quality Institute and other national quality regulatory agencies are functioning as independent institutions under the purview of various line ministries. Therefore, Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security to appoint a working committee with representatives of the relevant line ministries and national quality institutions to implement the proposal to establish the National Quality Council.

09. Construction of 934 Rain Water Harvesting Tanks in Jaffna district by Government of India

The Cabinet approval has been granted on 25.10.2016 to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of India to construct 3000 rainwater harvesting tanks in the district using the funds provided by the Government of India to provide clean drinking water in the Jaffna district. The project was scheduled to be completed within a period of three years. But due to the financial and technical problems that have arisen, approval has been given in the Cabinet meeting held on 10.10.2022 to extend the project period till June 2014 and install 1831 PVC rainwater tanks instead of ferro cement tanks. The Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms to establish 924 Rainwater Harvesting Tanks from the remaining funds under the project.

10. Obtaining additional allocations for youth development activities implemented by the National Youth Service Council

National Youth Service Council has planned the programs such as creating a million young entrepreneurs, guiding on the national and global labor market, conducting Divisional Secretariat level youth camps and conduct a national youth conference. Through these programs the council aims at instilling resilience, self-esteem and purposefulness in young people and equipping them with the necessary skills to cope with life's challenges and make the most of opportunities. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs to conduct these programs and to secure necessary funds to the National Youth Service Council for this purpose.

11. Submission of order made under the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Act, No.11 of 2021, to Parliament for approval

In accordance with the decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 25.03.2024 and 08.04.2024, Codegen Innovation (Pvt) Ltd, Port City BPO (Pvt) Ltd, IVIVA PTE Ltd, Echelon Trade (Pvt) and 99X Technology AS have been designated as secondary businesses of strategic importance, and the proposed exemptions or incentives for those businesses have been published in the Gazette. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Hon. President in his capacity as Minister of Investment Promotion to table the following orders issued under Section 53 of the Port City Economic Commission Act No. 11 of 2021 in Parliament for approval.

- The order published through Extraordinary Gazette No 2378/35 dated 05.04.2024
- The order published through Extraordinary Gazette No 2380/36 dated 19.04.2024
- The order published through Extraordinary Gazette No 2380/33 dated 19.04.2024
- The order published through Extraordinary Gazette No 2380/35 dated 19.04.2024
- The order published through Extraordinary Gazette No 2380/34 dated 19.04.2024

12. Criminal Procedure Code (Special Provisions) Draft Bill.

The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act No. 25 of 2024 has been passed in the Parliament on 31.05.2024 so that the judges are able to consider the period an accused spend in the remand prison before convicted to the offense he / she was alleged to be as a period of penalty. However, it has been recognized that there should have to be a mechanism to consider the period in the remand prison until the decision or the appeal decision is given, since those who were declared guilty before passing the amended act are not entitled for the relief under the amended act. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to the resolution furnished by the Minister of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms to issue directions to the Legal Draftsmen to prepare a bill to introduce a law of special provisions to implement powers entrusted with the President under the statute 34 of the Constitution so that necessary actions may be taken in regard to such criminals as well.

13. Amendment of Employees Provident Fund Act No. 15 of 1958.

The Employees Provident Fund has been established by the Employees Provident Fund Act No. 15 of 1958 for the social security of employees in the private and semi – government sector who are not entitled for a pension. The requirement of revising the said act to cater the concurrent socio – economic changes by increasing the number of members as well as providing a quality and efficient service to the members covered by the act has been recognized. Therefore, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal submitted by the Minister of Labour and Foreign Employment to direct the Legal Draftsmen to prepare a draft bill according to the preliminary draft so prepared.

14. Comprehensive strategies for uplifting small and medium scale entrepreneurship sector in Sri Lanka.

Micro, small and medium scale entrepreneurships directly contribute to the employment generation, enhancement of innovations and economic development. Due to the economic constraints developed by Sri Lanka during the recent past, micro, small and medium scale entrepreneurships were greatly affected. Therefore, considering the requirement to render assistance with investments and working capital in order to uplift those entrepreneurs once again, the Government has taken steps to implement a number of strategies by the Government. Accordingly, the project to re – empower the micro, small and medium scale entrepreneurships has been implemented under the funds of the Asian Development Bank to implement loan projects in the micro, small and medium scale entrepreneurships sector, whereas Rs. 40 billion has been allocated for the year 2024 in the regard. In addition to that, approval of the Cabinet of Ministers was granted at their meeting held on 24.02.2024 to implement an encouragement loan scheme to a value of Rs. 20 billion with the objective of uplifting micro, small and medium scale entrepreneurships. It has been planned to implement a special loan scheme for women entrepreneurs by establishing a revolving fund, utilizing Rs. 02 billion from the aforementioned allocations and the said loan scheme is scheduled to be implemented from 01.07.2024. The Cabinet of Ministers took the information furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies into consideration.

15. Obtaining funds of the Asian Development Bank to implement the Renovation and Financial Sustainability Programme in the power sector.

Preliminary discussions have been held between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Asian Development Bank to implement the Renovation and Financial Sustainability Programme in the power sector. The proposed programme is comprised of 03 sub programmes and, it is expected to obtain a total of USD 300 million as USD 100 million per each sub programme. The Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to the proposal furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies to obtain the loan of USD 100 million from the Asian Development Bank for financing for the proposed sub programme – 01 for implementing institutional structural reformation programme in the institutions of Ceylon Electricity Board and Ceylon Electricity (Pvt.) Company.

16. “Overseas Employee Salutation” programme

A request was made from the overseas employees to contribute at least from USD 500 million per month across legitimate means in order to decrease the trade gap encountered by the Sri Lankan economy at the wake of the year 2022. Followed by the positive response given by the overseas employees to that request, the employee remittances have been swelled up to USD 11 billion during June 2022 to May 2024. Therefore, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to the proposal furnished by the Minister of Labour and Foreign Employment to implement a programme named “Overseas Employee Salutation” (විගමනික භරසර) to evaluate the tremendous contribution by the overseas employees towards the financial and economic backdrop of the country.

17. Third amendment of the corporative agreement No. 383 – 128 signed with the Government of the United States of America.

An agreement has been signed by the Government of Sri Lanka with the Government of the United States of America on 31.08.2022 to receive a grant to finance the “Programme for a Sri Lanka with democracy, prosperity and the capability to face disasters” and followed by that Sri Lanka has been granted an amount of USD 9.069 million accordingly. During the year the value of the grant has been revised up to USD 28.299 million 02 times. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has proposed to further increase the value of the grant up to USD 52.835 million. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies to revise the corporative agreement by escalating the grant up to USD 52,835 million granted under “Programme for a Sri Lanka with democracy, prosperity and the capability to face disasters”.

18. Implementation of “Work Culture” project to motivate Sri Lankan youth entrepreneurs and work force.

A project proposal has been prepared by the National Youth Services Council in order to implement the project “Work Culture” which is a national initiative planned for uplifting the Sri Lankan economy by enhancing the productivity and efficiency among youth. The project is scheduled to be executed from June to August 2024 and aims at promoting productivity, recognizing the excellence, obtain participation of youth, encourage a work culture as well as maintain motivation among Sri Lankan youth. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President to implement the “Work Culture” project that encourages the Sri Lankan youth entrepreneurs and youth work force across the National Youth Services Board utilizing funds allocated to the Presidential Secretariat under Youth Development Programme.

In the event of any inconsistency between the English translations of this document, the Sinhala text shall prevail.